

Satan's Assault Against Job's Life

Chapter 2

Job 2:1–3 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

² *And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*

³ *And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.*

AT the core of Job's integrity is his fear of God and his distaste for evil. If men do not fear God and do not avoid following the paths of evil, then they cannot possess any true integrity and can be compromised fairly easily in all matters. Only when men fear the Lord will they seek to depart from evil. At its core, integrity possesses both respect for God and loathing of evil. When men lack these spiritual qualities, it is easy to lead them to compromise in so many other areas of their lives. It is God who keeps men, by His Word and by His Spirit, walking uprightly in life. When men leave Him and refuse to subject themselves to Him, their character will be forever damaged and ultimately unrepairable.

God states that Job's integrity is unique: *there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil.* Job was different from so many other men because of his deep and reverential fear of God. This aspect of his character also allowed him to endure such a difficult trial. Just as God knows those who fear Him on earth, so does He also know the temptations they

¹ *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, I Cor. 10:13*

² *Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I Cor. 10:13*

are able to overcome. (I Cor. 10:13) *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

(Ellicott, I Cor. 10:13) *There hath no temptation taken you.*—What is meant by a “temptation common to man” (or rather, *suited to man*) is explained further on as a temptation which one is “able to bear.” From the warning and exhortation of the previous verse the Apostle passes on to words of encouragement, “You need not be hopeless or despairing.” God permits the temptation by allowing the circumstances which create temptation to arise, but He takes care that no Fate bars the path of retreat. With each temptation he makes a way to escape from it.¹

Though Job's trials were extreme, the Lord knew that he possessed sufficient strength of faith to endure Satan's assaults and ultimately reach God's end for his life. Even if men sin while undergoing difficult trials, it is not because they do not have the ability to overcome them.

(Barnes, I Cor. 10:13) If people fall into sin, under the power of temptation, they only are to blame. They have strength to resist all the temptations that assail them, and God has given the assurance that no temptation shall occur which they shall not be able, by His aid, to resist. In all instances, therefore, where people fall into sin; in all the yielding to passion, to allurements, and to vice, man is to blame, and must be responsible to God. And this is especially true of Christians, who, whatever may be said of others, cannot plead that there was not power sufficient to meet the temptation, or to turn aside its power.²

When people read about a trial like Job's, they are tempted to blame the Lord for the trial. Undoubtedly, the Book of Job has caused many to bring accusations against the Lord simply because

they lack the insight to see God's ultimate purpose. But although men might fail God's test through their lack of trust in Him, that does not mean that divine trials are wrong. Ultimately, what Job endured did not exceed the limitations of his faith. The justice of God will not push any man beyond that which he can overcome by his continued reliance and trust in God. No matter what God purposes for men, if they remain confident in Him and His will for their lives, the spiritual trials they endure will prove to be for the good of God's people. Consequently, whenever God permits great trials, He also knows that those who are being tried have the ability to overcome—if they do not abandon but rather hold fast to their faith in God.

Although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. Satan had implied that the only reason Job feared the Lord was for the selfish reason that God had blessed him and placed a wall of protection around him. This claim was proven false when Job, even after losing all that he had, still worshiped God and remained subject to Him. Satan commonly makes scandalous claims against God's people, since the great accuser is surely not concerned if the lies he brings against God's own possess any real merit. Accusations, therefore, do not need to be true for Satan to bring them forth. The devil is described in Scripture as a liar³ and one who accuses the brethren night and day in his constant attempts to impugn God's elect. (Rev. 12:10) *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.* In Job's case, Satan re-

³ John 8:44 *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

⁴ Job 1:9-11 *Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? ¹⁰Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. ¹¹But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Job 2:4&5 *And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. ⁵But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Zech. 3:1&2 *And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. ²And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*

I Chrn. 21:1 *And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*

⁵ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Rev. 12:10

peatedly brought forth his devilish accusations to God in a continued effort to try to provoke Job to sin.

(Barnes, Rev. 12:10) The description of Satan as an accuser accords with the opinion of the ancient Hebrews in regard to his character. Thus he is represented in Job 1:9-11; Job 2:4-5; Zechariah 3:1-2; 1 Chronicles 21:1.⁴ The phrase "of the brethren" refers to Christians, or to the people of God; and the meaning here is, that one of the characteristics of Satan—a characteristic so well known as to make it proper to designate him by it—is that he is an accuser of the righteous; that he is employed in bringing against them charges affecting their character and destroying their influence. The propriety of this appellation cannot be doubted. It is, as it has always been, one of the characteristics of Satan—one of the means by which he keeps up his influence in the world—to bring accusations against the people of God. Thus, under his suggestions, and by his agents, they are charged with hypocrisy; with insincerity; with being influenced by bad motives; with pursuing sinister designs under the cloak of religion; with secret vices and crimes. Thus it was that the martyrs were accused; thus it is that unfounded accusations are often brought against ministers of the gospel, palsying their power and diminishing their influence, or that when a professed Christian falls the church is made to suffer by an effort to cast suspicion on all who bear the Christian name. Perhaps the most skillful thing that Satan does, and the thing by which he most contributes to diminish the influence of the church, is in thus causing "accusations" to be brought against the people of God.⁵

Those who bring false claims against the Lord's elect have close kinship with the devil. Any who engage in the devil's words and follow his pattern of bringing false accusations are very likely under his influence. Whenever accusations are brought against the people of God with-

out reliable evidence to prove that they are true, the devil is highly involved and exerting his malicious influence. Nothing reveals the true colors of a man more than when he brings charges against God's elect. The Jews did this with the Son of God,⁶ Sanballat with Hezekiah,⁷ and Korah with Moses.⁸ From these passages, and many more like them, we see that Satan's primary weapon to blunt the outreach of the kingdom of God is accusing those who seek to strengthen it.

Job 2:4&5 *And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.*

⁵ *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Satan did not actually know what Job would do; rather, he hoped that Job would curse God because of his suffering.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Job 2:4) Satan sneers bitterly at man's egotism and says that Job bears the loss of property and children because these are mere outward and exchangeable goods, but he will give up all things, even his religion, in order to save his life, if you touch his bones and flesh.⁹

We see here Satan's new tactic: since he has removed from Job all that God had blessed him with, to no avail, he wishes now to bring excruciating pain to his physical body. (John 10:10a) *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy:* Indeed, the hatred of the devil is so great toward God's chosen that he

will not be satisfied until they endure pain and suffering in their bodies. It was not enough for Jesus to die on the cross; before His death, those influenced by the devil inflicted as much pain on His body as it could bear. (Isa. 52:14) *As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:* Throughout human history, the devil has repeatedly inflicted the bodies of men with disease. Bodily suffering has always been part of the devil's evil and malicious purpose for man. By touching men's bodies, Satan hopes that their pain will cause them to abandon their religion and follow him in rebellion against God. The serpent cunningly knows that if a man's skin is touched, especially an unbelieving man, then he will curse God. Not only does the devil seek to inflict pain upon man, but his ultimate aim is for the man to curse God in the process. In the end, the devil is the greatest enemy of both God and man.

There is a divinity in undergoing pain, for when men's spirits are broken, their ears and hearts are often opened. For spiritually deaf men to hear God's voice, very often they must endure a broken life to prepare for it. The pride of men is so great that it is not until all is either lost or seemingly lost (which can include loss of physical health) that they become humble enough to receive God. Consequently, it is not until most men's spirits are broken that their hearts and self-conceit will be lowered enough for them to hear God. For the prodigal son, it took a famine and

⁶ Matt. 9:34 *But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.*

⁷ Neh. 6:1-8 *Now it came to pass when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) ²that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. ³And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? ⁴Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. ⁵Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand; ⁶wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. ⁷And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together. ⁸Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.*

⁸ Num. 16:1-3 *Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: ²and they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: ³and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?*

⁹ Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 2:4

physical depravity.¹⁰ For David, it was coming to grips with his sins, which included lying with Bathsheba as well as his sin against Uriah, her husband.¹¹ For us, we may need to experience similar loss and grief before we come to know that our ways and thoughts are wrong. The key for sincere repentance is the inward realization that we have been not merely partly wrong but completely wrong in our hearts and actions.

Before men can reach that inward enlightenment, they need to see their true condition. (Ps. 73:22) *So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.* It is only when men come to see themselves as they really are that they will be ready for God to teach them. It often takes pain and suffering for men to leave a religion that merely speaks of God for one that actually knows Him.

Job 2:6 And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

The Lord gave Satan permission to do to Job whatever he desired, with one restriction—he could not in any way endanger Job’s life. God had other plans for this godly man’s life, after he had learned the lessons necessary to bring him to greater spiritual maturity. Just as Jesus was ministered to by angels after His temptations,¹² Job would also be ministered to and blessed by God after his purifying trial was accomplished and God’s purpose for him was fulfilled.¹³

Job 2:7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.¹⁴

(Benson, Job 2:7) *And smote Job with sore biles*—ἐλκει πονηρῶ, with a foul ulcer, or evil inflammation, say the Seventy; breaking

¹⁰ Luke 15:14–18 *And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.* ¹⁵*And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.* ¹⁶*And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.* ¹⁷*And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!* ¹⁸*I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,*

¹¹ II Sam. 11:3&4 *And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?* ⁴*And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.*

II Sam. 11:14–17 *And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.* ¹⁵*And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.* ¹⁶*And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.* ¹⁷*And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.*

¹² Matt. 4:11 *Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*

¹³ Job 42:10 *And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.*

Job 42:12&13 *So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.* ¹³*He had also seven sons and three daughters.*

Job 42:15–17 *And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.* ¹⁶*After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons’ sons, even four generations.* ¹⁷*So Job died, being old and full of days.*

¹⁴ It has been commonly supposed that the disease of Job was a species of black leprosy commonly called “elephantiasis,” which prevails much in Egypt. This disease received its name from ἐλέφας *elefas*, “an elephant,” from the swelling produced by it, causing a resemblance to that animal in the limbs; or because it rendered the skin like that of the elephant, scabtons and dark colored. It is called by the Arabs *judhām* (Dr. Good), and is said to produce in the countenance a grim, distorted, and “lion-like” set of features, and hence has been called by some “Leontiasis.” It is known as the black leprosy, to distinguish it from a more common disorder called “white leprosy”—an affection which the Greeks call “*Leuce*,” or “whiteness.” The disease of Job seems to have been a universal ulcer; producing an eruption over his entire person, and attended with violent pain, and constant restlessness. A universal bile or groups of biles over the body would accord with the account of the disease in the various parts of the book. In the elephantiasis the skin is covered with incrustations like those of an elephant. It is a chronic and contagious disease, marked by a thickening of the legs, with a loss of hair and feeling, a swelling of the face, and a hoarse nasal voice. It affects the whole body; the bones as well as the skin are covered with spots and tumors, at first red, but afterward black. “Coxe, Ency. Webster.” It should be added that the leprosy in all its forms was regarded as contagious, and of course involved the necessity of a separation from society; and all the circumstances attending this calamity were such as deeply to humble a man of the former rank and dignity of Job. (Barnes’ *Notes on the Bible*, Job 2:7)

out and spreading itself over all his body. The biles, it seems, were like those inflicted upon the Egyptians, which are expressed by the same word, and threatened to the apostate Israelites, (Deuteronomy 28:27,)¹⁵ whereby he was made loathsome to himself and to his nearest relations, and filled with consuming pains in his body, and no less torments and anguish in his mind. *From the sole of his foot unto his crown*—In all the outward parts of his body. “His tongue,” says Poole, “he spared, that it might be capable of uttering those blasphemies against God which Satan desired and expected him to utter.” One boil, when it is gathering, is very distressing, and gives a man abundance of pain and uneasiness. What a condition was Job then in, who had biles all over his body, no part being free, and those as much inflamed, and of as raging a heat, as Satan could make them! If at any time we be exercised with sore and grievous distempers, let us not think ourselves more hardly dealt with than God has sometimes dealt with the best of his saints and servants. We know not how far Satan may have a hand, by God's permission, in the diseases with which mankind, especially the children of God, are afflicted; or what infections that prince of the air may spread, what inflammations may come from that fiery serpent. We read of one whom he had bound for many years, Luke 13:10.¹⁶ And should God suffer him to have his will against us, he would soon make the best and bravest of us very miserable. It is a judicious remark of Dr. Mede here, that it is not Job himself or his friends, but the author of the book, who attributes his calamities to Satan; for this writer's intention seems to have been to show, by a striking example, that the world is governed by the providence of God; and as the holy angels, whose ministry God makes use of in distributing his bountiful gifts, punctually execute all his commands; so Satan himself, with his agents, are under the power of God, and cannot inflict any evils on mankind without the divine permission.¹⁷

Job 2:8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

¹⁵ Deut. 28:27 *The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.*

¹⁶ Luke 13:10–13 *And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. ¹¹And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.*

¹² *And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.*

¹³ *And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.*

¹⁷ Benson Commentary, Job 2:7

¹⁸ Matt. 6:10 *Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

Luke 11:2 *And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.*

All Job had left with which to care for himself was a potsherd, an indication of the depravity of his situation. Although Job's condition needed the most tender, loving care and soothing ointments, all he possessed to deal with his disease was a hard, sharp piece of broken pottery. We see Job sitting in the ashes of what was once his wealthy life, now alone and having the least of things to comfort him and help him in his troubles. The potsherd is also symbolic of the sad state of Job's broken life: what had once been a beautiful vessel, distinguished and worthy of admiration, was now only rubble. Job sitting among the ashes shows us how despondent his soul must have been, lacking the strength to stand or to begin rebuilding his life. When men finally sit down on a job, they know they are incapable of doing anything more through their own power. Job knew that he was defenseless to stop the attacks on his family, life, and body, so he resigned himself to simply sit and wait for whatever else might come. He knew that he was humanly powerless to protect himself in any way.

When men view themselves as totally vulnerable and unable to remain standing by their own strength, reality finally sets in. At this point, they can come to know that all blessings and curses are made according to God's will. If Job feared God before, now this fear was intensified. He understood that not only can men not protect themselves against God's judgment, but they also cannot through their own power bring about His blessings. God's will be done in heaven and on earth.¹⁸ Is there any lesson more needed in the world today than this one? God controls all; without His protection and blessing, Satan can do what he wills on earth.

Nebuchadnezzar, a man of great power and influence, learned the same lesson as

Job.¹⁹ The mighty may possess position, wealth, or influence, but these things cannot protect them from God's overreaching sovereignty and, at times, Satan's assaults. God is ultimately in control and overrules all, both in heaven and on earth. Men would be wise to realize this, first about themselves and then concerning the whole of humanity. No one—neither governments nor individuals—can stand alone or operate apart from God's sovereign oversight. All life is God's, and Job's life is just a small example of this.

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

(Ellicott, Job 2:9) *Then said his wife.*—Thus it is that a man's foes are they of his own household (Micah 7:6; Matthew 10:36, &c.).²⁰ The worst trial of all is when those nearest to us, instead of strengthening our hand in God and confirming our faith, conspire to destroy it.²¹

When men are willing to betray even their own families, for the rest of their lives they will remain loyal only to their own lusts and desires. He who loves himself most has no true love either for God or for those closest to him. (Micah 7:6) *For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.* When men turn against

their blood, they turn against the laws of nature. When Cain slew Abel, his brother,²² not even brotherhood could prevent a heart of evil from committing murder. Job's wife should have demonstrated compassion, but instead her sinful heart spewed nothing but contempt. This might explain the pleasure-seeking lifestyles of Job's children, for a wife and mother this insensitive to grief could not have influenced her children in any godly way. Her words *Curse God, and die* show us her lack of respect or love for either God or man. Not only did the devil work to destroy Job's life, but he also turned Job's own wife against him. Satan entered Judas's heart when he betrayed Christ,²³ and it is highly likely that he did the same here with Job's wife. No one would encourage death unless he also did not have strong ties to the evil one, whose sole purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy²⁴ in the world.²⁵

Job 2:10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Here Job defends God, even though he is in great pain.

(Barnes, Job 2:10) This is the true expression of piety. It submits to all the arrangements of God without a complaint.²⁶

19 Dan. 5:18–22 *O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: ¹⁹and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. ²⁰But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: ²¹and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. ²²And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;*

20 Micah 7:6 *For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.*

Matt. 10:36 *And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

21 Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 2:9

22 I John 3:12 *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*

23 Luke 22:3 *Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.*

John 13:2 *And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;*

John 13:27 *And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.*

24 John 10:10a *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. . .*

25 I Pet. 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

26 Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 2:10

True Christians know that regardless of God's judgment, His actions are never unfair. Whereas an ungodly man will quickly smear God's name in times of trouble, true saints will defend it. They are more willing to sacrifice their reputations than allow others to lose confidence in God. To a righteous man, God's name is far more important than his own.

(Barnes, Job 2:10) In addition to that, true piety feels that all claim to any blessing, if it had ever existed, has been forfeited by sin.²⁷

When righteous men suffer loss, their eyes are first focused on themselves. They know that even if their sin remains unknown to them, it must still have been committed. Hence, when the godly undergo severe trials, they do not feel victimized by God. Rather, they surmise that some hidden sin is being dealt with by His justice. Instead of murmuring against the Lord,²⁸ Job held fast to his fear of God and his confidence in His ways.

Job 2:11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

As the book's structure reveals,²⁹ we are now ready for the next important section: the arrival of Job's three friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. No doubt these men were godly associates of Job, yet the record will reveal later that they ultimately lacked any proper wisdom to help him. Though men may be sincere and even share our faith in God, the words they speak are not always from God's Spirit or able to help in our troubles.

Just because a man is a Christian, one should not presume that all he says, or in fact that anything he says, comes from God's Holy Spirit. Foolishness often flows from the mouth of those who, though they believe in God, have little wisdom given to them from God. When we come to mourn and comfort people in their troubles, it is wise to engage only in what God inspires us to do or say. Good intentions do not help to attain divine results. When men are in pain, it is God's counsel alone that can help them, as no human reasoning, even if it speaks of God, will benefit those undergoing the trial. The Scriptures advise us to be quick to hear and slow to speak until by inspiration we are given something meaningful to say. (Jas. 1:19) *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*

²⁷ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 2:10

²⁸ Exod. 16:8 *And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD.*

Num. 14:27 *How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.*

Deut. 1:27 *And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.*

Ps. 106:25 *But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.*

Luke 15:2 *And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.*

John 6:41 *The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*

John 6:43 *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.*

John 7:12 *And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.*

Phil. 2:14 *Do all things without murmurings and disputings:*

²⁹ *The Book of Job: A New Translation* by Dr. E. W. Bullinger

A | i. 1–5. Introduction. Historical.

B | i. 6–ii. 10. Satan's assault. Job stripped of all.

C | ii. 11–13. The Three Friends. Their arrival.

D | iii. 1 —xxx. 40. Job and his friends.

E | xxxii.—xxxvii. Elihu.

D | xxxviii. 1. —xlii. 6. Jehovah and Job.

C | xlii. 7–9. The Three Friends. Their departure.

B | xlii. 9, 10. Satan's defeat. Job blessed with double.

A | xlii. 11–17. Conclusion. Historical.

Job 2:12~~6~~-13 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

¹³ So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

Taken aback by Job's appearance, his friends barely recognized that this was the same man they had once known. Na-

ked and altered by boils and loss of weight, Job was a shell of the man he had been before. At the sight of Job, the three men cried aloud, tore their clothes, and sat on the ground with their friend. Though Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar would later prove to have little wisdom and would need prayers as well,³⁰ they still showed their friend strong human compassion.

(Benson, Job 2:13) "A long silence," says Dr. Dodd, "is a very natural effect of an extraordinary grief, which overwhelms the mind, and creates a sort of stupor and astonishment."³¹

³⁰ *Job 42:7-10 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. ⁸Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. ⁹So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. ¹⁰And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.*

³¹ Benson Commentary, Job 2:13